



US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



513028

FACT SHEET

MISSISSIPPI RIVER GATEWAY
GEOGRAPHIC INITIATIVE
July 1995

What is a geographic initiative?

A comprehensive approach to environmental protection that focuses resources (Federal, State, local and tribal) within a geographic area to reduce risk to human health and secure real environmental improvement in a timely and efficient manner.

Basic Components:

- * Promote creative solutions to environmental problems that are not addressed by traditional regulatory programs.
- * Enhance coordination between environmental regulatory agencies active in an area, and enhance communication among those agencies and the public to set priorities and measure success.
- * Ensure compliance with environmental requirements and other environmental obligations.

Where is the Mississippi River Gateway Initiative located?

Western St. Clair and Madison Counties in Illinois.
The City of St. Louis and St. Louis County in Missouri.

Which agencies are involved?

Participants are still joining, but will consist of at least the following:

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (Regions 5 and 7)
East St. Louis Housing Authority
Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
Missouri Department of Health
Illinois Department of Public Health
U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of Illinois
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Attorney General's Office, Illinois
A Number of other Local Agencies, Organizations and
Community Groups

How is the initiative organized and what will it do?

As in the other initiatives in Region 5, a steering committee consisting of some of the agencies listed above sets the direction and priorities for action. Based upon information gathered from a series of community interviews (conducted early 1994) and from agency expertise within the initiative area, a number of work groups were formed to take coordinated action on a number of environmental issues. Work plans either have been or are currently being developed for the following areas:

Pollution Prevention: Work with industry in the Greater St. Louis area to achieve reductions in pollutants targeted for greatest risk.

Environmental Justice: Determine whether or not minority and/or low-income populations in the initiative area are disproportionately exposed to hazardous waste, hazardous substances, or other hazardous activities, and develop programs and tools to rectify the problem.

Lead: Work to reduce human exposure to environmental and household lead via State/Federal grant programs, information sharing and other creative approaches.

Environmental Enforcement/Compliance: Conduct multi-media inspections, target certain industries/areas for investigations, and coordinate existing inspections. Also, seek to provide information to industry to encourage voluntary compliance with all applicable laws.

Ecosystem/Habitat Restoration: Work with natural resource agencies to identify likely areas for restoration and develop programs to do so.

Communications/Public Involvement: Develop a community-based public involvement program that encourages dialogue among governments, industry, community groups and others in order to agree on problem areas and means to resolve those problems.

Where can I get additional information?

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Mississippi River Gateway Initiative

